DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 058 242 TE 002 766

AUTHOR Jesser, David L.
TITLE Promising Practices for Improving Classroom Atmosphere and Pupil Motivation for Learning, Volume I: Language Arts.
INSTITUTION Western States Small Schools Project.
SPONS AGENCY Nevada State Dept. of Education, Carson City.
PUB DATE Sep 67
NOTE 122p.; A Collection of Practices Developed and Used by Classroom Teachers Participating in the Western States Small Schools Project for Nevada

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$6.58
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Environment; Composition (Literary); Creative Writing; Elementary Education; *English Instruction; Individualized Instruction; Inservice Teacher Education; *Language Arts; *Learning Motivation; Oral Expression; Phonics; Reading Instruction; Secondary Education; *Teacher Developed Materials; *Teaching Techniques; Vocabulary Development
IDENTIFIERS Nevada

ABSTRACT

The several practices described in this volume represent attempts by classroom teachers of Nevada to solve some of the educational problems with which they are confronted. These practices are discussed under the following headings: Helping Teachers to Help Children Learn and Use Phonics; Teaching the Alphabet in the Kindergarten; Teaching Blends in Phonics; Improving Reading; Individualized Reading; Helping Children Be Better Reader Through Individualized Reading; The Language Experience Approach to Reading; Developing and Increasing Interest in Reading; Individualized Reading; Creating a Desire to Write; Creative Writing; A Beginning Unit on Creative Writing in the Sixth Grade; Improving Creative Writing on a Junior High Level; Improving Expression in Written Composition; Improving Self Expression; Read for Fun to Improve Oral Expression; Improving Oral Expression; Improving Ability in Oral Reports; Teaching Vocabulary Through Creative Writing and Oral Expression in Grades VII and VIII; Improving Teaching Vocabulary Building; Using Writing Assignment Sheets That Provide Choices in Individualized English Literature; and Helping Slow Readers. (DB)

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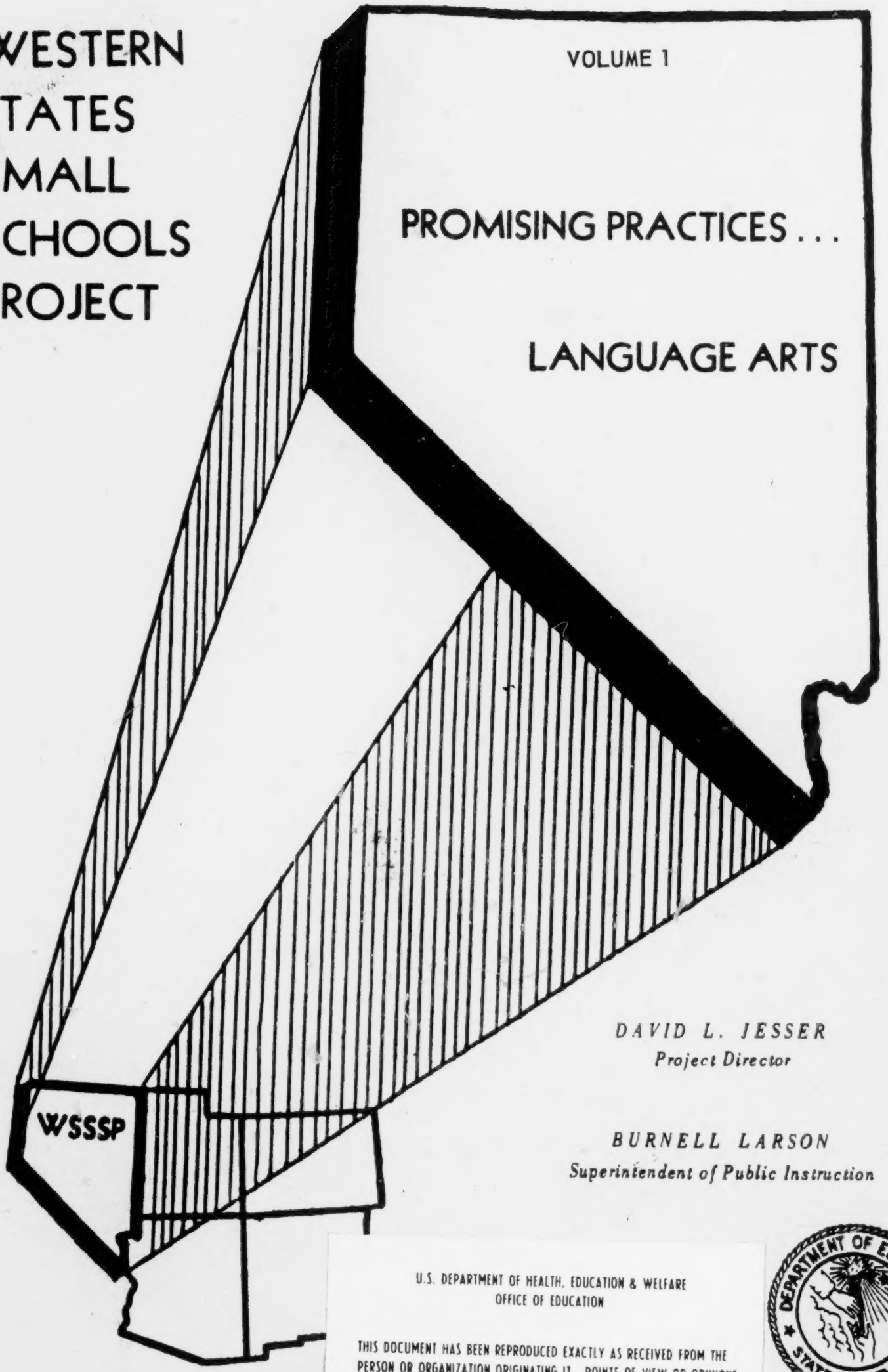
WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

VOLUME 1

PROMISING PRACTICES . . .

LANGUAGE ARTS



DAVID L. JESSER
Project Director

BURNELL LARSON
Superintendent of Public Instruction

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT
FOR NEVADA

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND PUPIL MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

VOLUME I: LANGUAGE ARTS

[1967]

ED

A Collection of Practices Developed and Used by Classroom Teachers
Participating in the Western States Small Schools Project
for Nevada

DAVID L. JESSER, DIRECTOR

INTRODUCTION

The several practices described on the following pages represent attempts by classroom teachers of Nevada to meet at least a few of the educational problems with which they are constantly confronted. The described practices are at the same time indicative of the type of effort these teachers have made.

Each of the teachers contributing to this volume have made an effort to strengthen the educational program in his or her own classroom. It is hoped that this volume will subsequently serve as an "idea book" for other teachers as they pursue the same basic goal.

It should be noted that for some teachers some of the practices described will be very similar to what many good teachers have been doing for years. Others, however, will be perceived as being novel, unique, and truly innovative. The teacher perusing this volume should therefore do so on a selective basis; those practices which seem a propos should be carefully studied, while those not appearing to be such should be, in effect, "filed away for future reference." The teacher who does perceive a practice to be worthwhile should feel free to adapt the practice to his or her own unique situation.

David L. Jesser

Carson City, Nevada
September, 1967

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C1

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND PUPIL MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

HELPING TEACHERS TO HELP CHILDREN LEARN AND USE PHONICS

Flo Reed
Elementary Education Consultant
State Department of Education

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

HELPING TEACHERS TO HELP CHILDREN
LEARN AND USE PHONICS

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Criticism of the teaching of reading has put pressure upon teachers. Many have reacted by putting a great deal of emphasis on phonics; some are trying a phonetic approach to reading; many are using a variety of workbooks and dittoed worksheets. These are often forced upon children without relation to the total reading program and with little regard for individual pupil's needs in either spelling or reading.

Teachers complain that pupils do not apply phonics to spelling and reading even though they can do oral drills, workbook pages and dittoed sheets perfectly. This is a serious and frustrating problem for pupils and teachers.

This coming school year I hope to help elementary teachers, through individual conferences and workshops, to teach phonics as one of several skills which help children learn to use techniques which will enable them to more effectively help children make phonics a functional tool.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
A. Consultant's Preparation		
A bibliography of articles and books, including recent research on phonics will be prepared. This will not be considered complete because it is important that teachers add to the list.	Selecting material which strongly supports consultant's point of view.	Include references which take different views of the place of phonics in the reading program.
A phonics sequence for teachers word lists for testing auditory and visual acuity, lists of words to use in illustrating different phonetic elements are prepared.		
Materials and suggestions for improving teaching techniques are filed and ready for use. Many of these have been contributed by teachers of Nevada.		
Suggestions for pupil activities, including games and independent activities, will be available for teacher discussion and use.		
B. Teacher's Preparation:		
Most teachers are aware of the problem of making phonics functional and have asked for help. Many have already begun to evaluate their present programs and are looking for ways to improve.	Some teachers do not like to change methods and techniques or to take time to analyze specific difficulties of pupils.	Find a strong point or a point of interest and try to work from there. Work with the teacher on a specific problem which he or she mentions.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. Practice:		
Teachers will discuss and list difficulties that children have in applying phonics to spelling and reading.	There will be a tendency on the part of some teachers to place blame on materials or on lack of ability of pupils.	The teachers may be right, but they should be helped to accept and respect children and to evaluate materials carefully and reject that which is not suitable.
A. Diagnosis of Difficulties will be made:	There is often a tendency to generalize rather than to find and analyze specific difficulties.	Work with individual teachers in helping to set up a graph or chart of some means of getting a clear picture of the class and individual achievement and needs.
Information from pupil records, achievement tests and from teachers who have observed the child.		
Ideas of teachers who have had similar cases.		
Information from professional books, articles and research studies by authorities in the field of phonics, reading and spelling.	Teachers do not have time to do the necessary professional reading.	Make available some professional books and articles. Prepare an outline or short statement giving the list of some of the material.
B. Planning of Instruction:	Plans tend to be vague instead of concise and clear cut.	Help teachers find a way to list objectives and ways of accomplishing them. Encourage and help them to put relevant material in easy-to-use-files.
After finding problems and weaknesses of the class and individual pupils, each teacher will plan specific learning experiences which she feels are important for the class as a whole, for sub-groups and for individuals. Planning will include:		
1) A list of phonetic elements to be learned, including a sequence based upon pupil's spelling needs and reading material used;	A teacher sometimes has a vague idea of the skills to be taught; often he or she has set ideas on what and how to teach phonics.	Help teachers to see phonics as a tool and to discover ways of helping children to use this tool. Exchange of ideas among teachers. Direct teachers to sources of lists, games, activities, etc.
2) Gathering of materials to be used, as word lists, games, practice materials, stories;		
3) Use of tape recorders, records, overhead projectors and other aids should be included.	Some teachers are resistant to the use of machines.	Have machines available for teachers for demonstration and practice.

III PRACTICE - Continued

A brief outline of methods, and techniques to be used. This should list independent learning activities designed to strengthen individual weaknesses of pupils.	The time element and the lack of available materials present problems to teachers.	Evaluate present schedule and practices. Consider weekly time allotment rather than daily. Ask cooperation of principal in planning purchase and use of machines.
Individual check sheets for pupils so that a record is always available for use in helping the individual and for further planning of class and group instruction.	Many teachers have not kept records showing progress and needs of individual pupils and do not know how to set up a notebook for this.	Show samples of records or check sheets used by other teachers. Help teachers set up a way of record keeping.
Pupils may keep graphs or charts to record and show individual progress.	Some teachers will feel that a pupil cannot keep his record.	Show examples. Help teacher and pupils if necessary.
C. Evaluation of Learning:	Teachers are often too general in evaluations.	Help teachers in finding specific skills in which each pupil needs help. The use of the teacher and pupil record charts are of great value for this.
Through the use of teacher and pupil records the teacher and pupils should determine what the next learning experiences and practices should be. The teacher will be encouraged to evaluate very frequently and to have a conference with individual pupils as often as needed, probably once a week. The conference may not take over 2 or 3 minutes. Pupils who are doing well need the conference time so that the teacher can tell them so and can direct them toward interesting and challenging activities. The children having difficulties will need more conference time.	Teachers feel that there is not enough time for conferences.	Show teachers by demonstration how conferences can take place while other children are doing independent work, library reading, or are working on other lessons.
After evaluation, which leads to diagnosis, the teacher will be ready to continue with her plans, revising them as indicated by the evaluation and diagnosis.	Evaluations are not used effectively.	Work with teachers on specific cases.

IV. EVALUATION

DESIRED OUTCOMES

A. To help teachers make the teaching of phonics more effective through:
   1) Observing diagnosis of pupil abilities and needs.
   2) Careful planning of skills to be taught
   3) Use of a variety of instructional materials and aids
   4) Continuous evaluation of pupil progress and needs

B. To give pupils a functional tool to use in spelling and reading.

OBSERVED OUTCOMES

In the past such a procedure has been quite effective. Teachers have stated that pupils have become more competent in the use of phonics. Teachers who have not worked in the ways suggested have asked for assistance.

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND PUPIL MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

TEACHING THE ALPHABET IN THE KINDERGARTEN

Marian J. Hepworth
Wells Elementary School

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

TEACHING THE ALPHABET IN THE KINDERGARTEN

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Kindergarten children are eager to learn. They want to be grown up and resent being called "little children". The statement was made by Mrs. McCall that it is a crime to withhold knowledge from children, saying that particular area is not taught in this grade. I feel this way about the kindergarten program. Kindergarten children want to learn to read, so teaching them the alphabet is fun, and not a difficult task. The child who knows the alphabet letters and some sounds reads more quickly according to our first grade teachers. Without teaching reading in the kindergarten, the children learn to read their own names and the names of the others in the class. They learn that some of their names begin alike, but don't end alike.

Teaching the alphabet in the kindergarten is not a program that is drilled but is done through games. The children gain not only in knowledge which they are so eager to acquire, but they gain in poise and confidence. They seem to sense that they are just one step from reading, and a few begin to read. It helps at the close of the day in handing out the art work when some of the children in the room can read all the names of the others in the room.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Colored alphabet cards placed on bulletin board. Cards have a picture with each letter.		
One small bulletin board used to display alphabet letter (for that week) in capital and small letters with accompanying pictures.	Sometimes children cut out pictures from magazines which are too small.	Talk the problem over better with the children so they realize that small pictures can't be seen easily.
III. PRACTICE:		
"Alphabet Song" is taught, teacher pointing to the letters.	Children may learn m, n, and s, x incorrectly.	Teacher say as well as sing these letters, being sure no one is confusing these sounds, calling s an x, or laying l-m-n as "a lemon."
Each day 5 name cards are placed on the Helpers' Chart. Children look at the beginning letter first, then the whole name.		
Play ABC Lotto. Six can play at a time. They identify beginning letter through a picture and the printed letter.	Some religious groups object to this game because of the name.	Perhaps call it "ABC Game". Destroy the box it came in and place the cards in a large shoe box.
Children name as many words as they can think of that start with a particular letter and sound. Teacher writes them down.		
Play the game, "I am thinking of something that begins with" - - and name the letter and sound. Children start guessing. Child who guesses takes a turn of asking.		

IV. EVALUATION

Desired Outcomes

To gain a skill which will help the children.

To help the children grow intellectually.

To satisfy their curiosity and interest in printed words placed about the room.

To gain confidence and poise through this knowledge.

To help each child gain in this skill when he is ready, and for me to have the wisdom to know when they are not ready.

Observed Outcomes

Children loved the ABC Lotto Game.

Children retained the sound learned and delighted in thinking of more words beginning with a particular sound after we had worked on it.

Children enjoyed reading and attempting to read the names of the others in the class.

All the children learned to sing the alphabet.

Over half the class could name the letters of the alphabet from the ABC Lotto, and not just name the picture.

Unexpected Results or Pitfalls

Some of the children became so interested in this learning experience that I spent more time with them than I should as the time would fly by before I realized it and I hadn't spent enough time visiting with the children.

TEACHING BLENDS IN PHONICS

Essie Strickland
Austin Elementary School

TEACHING BLENDS IN PHONICS

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Some of my children were having trouble saying words beginning with the blends "tr" and "cl". I wanted to help them overcome this problem so they could read more fluently and spell words more accurately in their written work.

We named several words that began with these blends and wrote them on a wall chart. The words were read, used in stories, found in stories, and referred to when a child needed help in writing or sounding out a word beginning with one of these blends.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Words beginning with "tr" and "cl" blends were written on a wall chart.	Children may attempt to sound out each letter of the blend causing the sound to become distorted.	Write the word train on the wall chart and put a picture of a train beside it. Also under the "cl" blend write the word clown and put a picture beside it.
Listen carefully as the children say the words and be sure they are pronouncing them correctly.	Some children may not pronounce their words correctly.	Help them to enunciate clearly.
Be sure the child hears the word correctly.	Child may not hear well.	If in doubt give child a hearing test.
III. PRACTICE:		
While reading the child referred to the wall chart to help sound out words beginning with the blends "tr" and "cl".		
When writing stories or doing other written work, child referred to the chart to help himself spell words that begin with these blends.		
To check child's progress, tests were given occasionally in which a list of words was given to each child. Each circled the "tr" or "cl" blend words as indicated by me.		
Using the findings from the tests, children who still needed help were grouped for this purpose.	Child may feel he is being singled out because he cannot learn as quickly as others.	I had various groups working on things they needed help in also. We are not all perfect in all things.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To help child overcome problem of saying words beginning with blends "tr" and "cl".

To help child read more smoothly.

To help child spell more accurately.

Observed Outcomes

Children learned to say words beginning with blends more smoothly.

They learned to read more rapidly.

They became better spellers.

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND PUPIL MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

IMPROVING READING

Margaret Huggins
Elko County School District

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

IMPROVING READING

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

In September I began my individualized reading program with eighteen students. Two were non-readers, eight were placed in a controlled group (this group was unable to begin Second Grade Basal), and the remaining eight were able to select books of their own choosing.

I was hoping to instill in them the love and enjoyment of reading, and also teach them how to think critically, originally, imaginatively, and daringly. To develop these potentialities, I knew that I must set up a good classroom atmosphere where youngsters could accept constructive criticism and would have a warm and loving relation toward fellow classmates. People learn to love in only one way--being loved.

With the use of the overhead projector and phonograph, I began my program by giving a fifteen minute phonetic lesson every morning to the entire class. The program was outlined as follows: initial sounds, blends, vowels, dipthongs, digraphs, compound words, root words, syllables, prefixes, and suffixes. As the program progressed, I planned on working with needed groups. At times we did sentence sheets together. I called this "tearing words apart" because we would analyze each word, looking for vowels, blends, etc. We also did a "vowel cheer" to make this process of learning more enjoyable.

An individual conference was held with each child at least once a week. During the individual conference, there was a close interaction between the student and myself. During this time I found their weaknesses; and the following day I would assign children to needed groups.

Comprehension, phonetic and structural analysis was checked, using workbooks and

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION - Continued:

various tests. The workbook that accompanies the basal text, I required completed. This was not enjoyable, as the children would remark, "I'd rather read than do this."

For further enrichment of the program, Friday was set aside for sharing time. Children would give oral or written reports, do dramatizations, or show drawings. Following sharing time, I had hoped to increase interest in various fields of learning and to work on acceptive criticism.

In time, I had planned to discontinue the one controlled group. However, I knew I needed to work daily with the non-readers.

The students were delighted with the program. Their enthusiasm was contagious. Youngsters begged to read. The classroom atmosphere was excellent. Very little reprimanding was needed; and youngsters were delighted to write stories. We shared our stories with other grades, which helped increase the pupils' confidence. At times it was embarrasing, as youngsters would cling to individuals who entered the room, begging them to read their story or listen to what they had found interesting in a book.

At the end of the year the pupils were able to make comprehensive reports from any reference book, including encyclopedias. The children were also evaluating books containing the same information.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Outline of program approved by principal.		
Books were obtained from school and city library. Children brought books from home.	Room would be noisy at first.	Teacher must act as a resource.
Enrichment of program books selected according to holidays and birthdays.	Children would spend a lot of time selecting a book.	Some children will need help in selecting a book.
Each child kept a notebook. After reading book, child recorded title, author, and a short description.	Children would have to be shown where to locate author.	Children must be taught when a book is too difficult.
Students could read orally to one another.	Children would be noisy.	Class must be instructed to respect one another and to be quiet during reading time.
Students worked with one another checking phonics and vocabulary.	Some children would have difficulty working together.	Time must be set aside for oral reading.
Children were free to walk around quietly selecting books.	May stop and visit with a neighbor.	During activity time, children can visit with one another.
Children could work on project for Friday.	May begin project before reading.	Project must not be started until discussed with the teacher.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE:		
Individual conference held with each child at least once a week.	At first some children would not be ready for a conference.	Constant reminding to complete book for individual conference.
Children who were able to read second grade basal were given a sheet listing stories in the book. Could read any story. Check this for individual conference.	Children would rather read trade books than basal.	Required to read one basal story a week. Could then select trade books.
Those who were not able to read the basal could select a book from the easy reader section and could report on one of these.	Children were afraid to venture into reading. Would sometimes choose a book that was too difficult.	Constant check was made for those who were unable to read basal. Children were guided to right book.
Small cards were used to print words missed. These were checked by classmates when studied. I also checked at next conference.		
Three questions were asked.	After questions, could evaluate if they had comprehended the story.	When a child could not answer a question at conference, he had to return to his seat and read until he found the answer.
Children were never to interrupt an individual conference.	Some would invariably do this.	Class discussion held when someone interrupted the conference. Good and bad points aired.
During the reading period, children could ask one another for help with words.	At times might be noisy.	
If they were working on a project and did not know how to spell a word, they could hand me a piece		

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE - Continued:		
of paper and I would write the word. This was done only when they could not get help from a classmate.		
An individual sheet was kept on each child. Note describing conference, weaknesses, listed. Occasionally tests were given for type of phonetic work we were doing.		Some children wanted to report on five books. This was difficult for me, as I had to demand they could only report on one, as the conference was short.
Tests were given after completion of each section in basal text. After evaluating test, I worked with each child on his weak points.		A period of morning recess was set aside for these additional books.
Children discussed with me what they were planning to do for Friday.	Would begin without planning.	Children would sometimes report together. This gave confidence to shy and withdrawn child.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To enrich reading

To allow students to progress at their own rate of speed.

To provide an opportunity for children to express themselves.

To plan activities to help children with a limited background.

To allow suggestion for improvement to come from the class.

To have a flexible and democratic room.

Observed Outcomes

Reading became infectious.

Children were able to accept constructive criticism.

Controlled group was able to go independently in eight weeks.

One of the non-readers able to go independently towards end of year. Achievement score for this child was third grade. Other non-reader was immature; and I recommended he be retained.

Children were aware of others if cheating was occuring. Sometimes a child would record a story that he had not read.

Children were reading books way beyond their level.

Shy and withdrawn children were responding and showing confidence.

Group reading was not enjoyed.

Students were reading with expression and were able to read quickly, without hesitation.

Children were comprehending without the use of workbooks.

Observed Outcomes - Continued

Children became interested in books other than the ones they were reading.

Fields of history, science, and health were delved into deeply.

Children learned from other students things such as book content, correct grammar, and reporting techniques.

Children were aware of poor listeners and reporters, and appreciated the efforts of others.

Respect for one another was increased.

Children had a feeling of independence and were able to work without much guidance.

Unexpected Results or Pitfalls

Basal texts were of no value. It was a fallacy that children had to begin from the first story and read to the end of the book. I discovered they could read any story. We have been restricting children's learning by adhering to basal text.

Achievement scores in spelling for the group were 4.7. It was rather difficult to assess the reading score, as I felt the achievement of the previous year was not comparative.

Workbooks should be eliminated. Certain pages should be used for testing.

Every child had confidence at the end of the year. He could speak and act freely.

Unexpected Results or Pitfalls - Continued

The first grade teacher and myself worked together to strengthen confidence. We shared our stories; I sent my best readers in daily to sit with a group of oral readers. This also helped the first grade teacher. We had amateur shows on Friday. The climax was a circus that the youngsters gave at the end of the year. They painted circus people and animals, which were placed in the halls. The entire school became excited. The children worked out their own skits and furnished the costumes. We served popcorn and pink lemonade. It was indeed a triumphal success. The school children and the parents will never forget this experience. This has been the most exciting year of my teaching career. I can truthfully say--"It is the only way to teach reading."

INDIVIDUALIZED READING

Emma E. Snider
Wells Grammar School

INDIVIDUALIZED READING

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I plan to start the Individualized Reading Program in my third grade room in September.

I wish to see if I can improve the reading ability of the different students and to build up a greater interest in reading in each individual.

The children need to comprehend what they read, and to be able to share it with others.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Procure books with the help of the librarian.		
Have all books in a centralized location, so each child will feel free to get them.	Some students may use this corner to visit.	Students must be quiet and read silently. No visiting.
Let each child pick his own book.	Child may pick a book too hard or too long.	Teacher can help the child select a book on his reading level.
Discussion of book with the teacher.		
Student evaluation of the story.	Student may be very shy and have very little to say.	Teacher may have to ask questions to draw out the shy pupil. Help him talk.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE:		
Student sharing--each student must share a book he has read with the class.		
Class evaluation of classmate's book.	Class must not become critical.	Must give good points and helpful suggestions, as well as criticisms.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To encourage better reading habits.

To inspire students to enjoy their reading.

To encourage better spelling and writing habits.

To give children experience in speaking before a group.

To encourage correct speech and more creative writing.

V. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:

1. Library
2. Word Lists
3. Dictionary
4. Story books from home

HELPING CHILDREN BE BETTER READERS THROUGH INDIVIDUALIZED READING

Thelma B. Olsen
Virgin Valley Elementary School

HELPING CHILDREN BECOME BETTER READERS THROUGH INDIVIDUALIZED READING

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The last two years I have been helping with groups of children who are having difficulties. They aren't the slow learners, but those who, according to tests, should be much better readers than they are. They are children working far below their capacities.

I was interested in bringing these children up to their full capacities. I wanted them to love to read, instead of disliking it. Abilities among these students varied so much that it was unrealistic to confine instruction to a group, so I plunged into the waters of individual instruction in reading. The experience has been stimulating and rewarding to me, because the children have responded well.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
The first activity to be planned is reading. Each child chooses a book or similar piece of material on the basis of the following criteria: (1) he likes it, and (2) he can read it with a maximum of three unknown words on a page.	Children may choose materials too difficult.	Teacher must act as a guide and help the child choose material on his level.
A. SELF SELECTION		
1. The child has full privileges of selecting the material he wishes to read.		The teacher offers suggestions when asked.
2. The child chooses from several books which the teacher feels appropriate for the child.		In arranging the possibilities for selection, the teacher considers what the child has previously read for the difficulty of the material and other related factors.
3. The child reads a required book at his own rate, or chooses from three of four recommended books.	The child may want to read required books.	Make the child feel a need for doing this.
4. The teacher has a collection of five to twenty items each day she tries to "sell" to the child. These are trade books, readers, weekly school newspapers. These can be owned by the child, library, teacher, or school.	May not be able to get materials that will be of interest to each child.	Listen and watch closely each child so you'll be able to anticipate what the child will enjoy reading.
5. Child alternates a free choice in a trade book selection with free choice of material in a basic reader.		

III. PRACTICE:

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCE

The reading conference is the heart of the individual approach to reading. It is a time for intense teaching specifically geared to individual needs with emphasis and aids appropriate to the child's interest, personality, and reading strengths and weaknesses. It is crucial in the need to meet individual differences.

The conference should include these major phases:

A. Preparation (teacher and child).
B. Conference proper.

EVALUATION BY TEACHER OF

1. Diagnosis of reading problems:

   A. Skills of words recognition.
   B. Skills of work meanings.
   C. Skills of comprehension.
   D. Skills of interpretation.
   E. Skills in reading for details.

2. Oral reading ability.

3. Assessment of personality according to choice of behavior.

4. Records kept on each child.

5. Closure of the conference.

IV. EVALUATION:

Observed Outcomes

A. Program has been notable:

1. Children gain two or three years during school year.
2. Each child feels good about himself as a person developing competence in reading.
3. Each child finds the pace comfortable for him.
4. Each child gets just the amount of help he needs in a particular skill at the right moment without having to feel he is wasting other's time.
5. Each child has the best opportunity to develop judgement as to the most suitable reading for his purpose.
6. The most real and interesting experiences can be shared with others.
7. Each acquires independent work habits.
8. Each will have an unconfined vocabulary, by reading a variety of books
9. Each acquires a greater love for reading.

Desired Outcomes

1. Allows child to select his own books on the basis of his needs.
2. Allows him to read books on his own comfortable reading level.
3. Allows him to read at his own rate of speed.
4. Gets rid of the status problems associated with directing children into "slow," "average" and "fast" reading groups.

Unexpected Results and Pitfalls

A. The child may read too many books of the same kind.

B. The teacher may tend to help guide the child's thinking and choices too much.

V. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:

1. A large selection of books including all varieties: Basal texts, supplementary readers, library books, texts in the various fields and trade books. Pamphlets, brochures, teacher made and pupil work materials, magazines and newspapers. Subject titles from adventure, science, mystery, people, and fairy tales to animals, folklore, poetry, music and history.

2. Most important is the consideration of children's reading levels, tastes, and personality needs.

THE LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH TO READING

Mary M. Birdzell
Wells Grammar School

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

THE LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH TO READING

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I have been using the basal reading program. The manual accompanying the basal text is full of teaching suggestions. Since the basic text was adopted by the school administrators I thought it was my duty to teach from it and follow it to the letter to the best of my ability.

I was concerned about my children. Individual needs were not being adequately met in the three or four reading groups I had because of the wide range of ability and the flexibility of the groups.

Pupil's time was not being effectively used in the reading circle. Time was being wasted, and children would not follow in oral reading situations.

The work sheets used during independent work time were not helping the children to read and consumed much of my time for correction. Many of the children were not interested and pupil control was difficult to maintain.

Stereotyped grouping provided a psychological handicap for many children. Regardless of mental ability children placed in low reading groups behaved like slow children.

The basic reading lacked motivation. Many children were not interested in the content or the vocabulary of the story. Unfamiliar speech patterns were used and the children were merely calling words. The slower children often heard the more advanced groups read the stories and knew the surprise endings, so the appeal of the story was lost.

The Language Experience Approach To Reading as it was explained at the Workshop seemed to be my answer for a better reading situation. I learned that the Language Experience Approach To Reading helps children discover reading and writing through their own experiences. By using this approach I know that whatever children have experienced they can think about: that what they can think about they can talk about. I can help each child discover that whatever he can talk about can be written and read by the child, himself and others.

PROCEDURE	POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
At the first day of school each child was encouraged to express his reaction to some experience.		
Materials such as objects, paints, colors and manipulative materials were provided for added expression.		
Interest centers as book, art, science, materials, math, dramatization, were attractively arranged in the room.	Materials to be put in these centers are not easily available. It takes some time and a systematic way for the collection of the items to be effective.	It is most desirable and profitable to have these centers operational before planning the reading program.
For extending the experience background of the children study trips to the park, a fun ride in the school bus to the high school, the business houses, and a treat at the Crossroads Drive Inn, films and pictures, exhibits, bulletin board display and resource persons were used to encourage thinking, talking, and dictating.		
A wide selection of children's literature and poems were read each day.		

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIER	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE: As the children matured in their language development they were led to make the transfer from concrete experience to the printed word. A few of the mechanics of written language were pointed out as I recorded the dictated stories. When the children had the necessary language maturity I placed them in smaller groups of 10 while the rest of the class engaged in an activity chosen at an activity center. As the child from the group dictates his story I help him make discrimination responses and record them with a felt pen and large manuscript letters on a paper. Each child is encouraged to recall the words used in his own dictated stories, and thus develop the initial sight word vocabulary. As each child dictates experiences to accompany a completed picture I help the child discover words that are alike. Children are developing these skills necessary for independent writing and reading as they describe their own reaction to experience.		

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATED POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE - Continued		
When the child expresses the wish to write his own story I write the story the child dictates. Then the child copies my writing.		
As soon as several children choose to write their own stories a group is formed. The children who have thought through ideas they wish to express come together to get needed help from me and the other children. The children, myself or the child may suggest needed words which he will need to help in order to write his story. The needed words are written on the chalkboard.		
As soon as the group of 10 children have an opportunity to identify needed words they will be listed on the chalkboard. Children may observe two words that begin with the same sound.		
As the children gain interest, maturity and skill in reading and writing they have many resources for locating needed words. This could be the word list, picture dictionary, children's written material, library books, and interest centers.		
As soon as the child has mastered the basic vocabulary of simple adult prepared books he can read these books for information or enjoyment. Phonics and other word attack skills are taught as part of the writing program.	Good books and an adequate amount should be available before going into self selection. Different levels of reading and interest.	Budget.

PROCEDURES	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS

III. PRACTICE - Continued

As needed help is provided for the children I may discover problems which are common to several children. When these are identified I bring them together as a group to work on those specific needs.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

By the end of grade one all the children have had many opportunities to experience, think, talk, write and read.

Books are read for enjoyment and information.

No child is ever placed in low or fast groups as no such groups exist.

DEVELOPING AND INCREASING INTEREST IN READING

Charles E. McGrale, Jr.
Mammoth Elementary School
Mammoth Lakes, California

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

DEVELOPING AND INCREASING
INTEREST IN READING

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Sixth Grade Class was rather large (30) for a rural district; and library books were difficult to obtain. The Mono County Schools Library is sixty miles away, and the nearest Public Library is forty-five miles away. It is not only difficult for the children to obtain books on their own, but it is also difficult for teachers to obtain all the "free reading" books they would like to have for their students. Having a large group multiplies these problems, since there is a wider range of interests and reading abilities involved.

It was almost impossible to convince twenty per cent of these children that reading was enjoyable. Very seldom would these people read anything that was not required or specified directly.

I asked the class if it would like to have a library hour, a "free reading" period, each week. The response was extremely favorable; and I asked the class that if anyone had books at home to please bring them at this time. Those people who brought books the first time were obviously the better readers and were eager to share them with the rest of the group. They were asked to give a brief, oral summary in front of the group and then loan the book to anyone who thought the book might be interesting enough to read.

Each child was required to be his own librarian, make cards for his own book, and in general keep his own records.

Our class library developed quite rapidly, and we soon had a tremendous variety of books.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Arranged for a library hour each week.		
Students wanting to contribute to the program brought their own books from home to build a class library.	Students' books might be treated carelessly by some.	Establish standards of care and the individual's responsibility towards other peoples' property.
Each student acted as his own librarian.		
A very permissive, democratic, unthreatening atmosphere was created.		
No requirements or standards were imposed as regarding choice of books, other than making sure the book was not too difficult for the child's ability.	The slow readers may conversely choose books which are too easy, lose interest more rapidly, and possibly become a disturbing factor for others.	The teacher must watch and check these people carefully.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE:		
Fifteen minutes were allowed at the beginning of the hour for oral summaries and exchange of books. (Children told to "sell" their book to other readers.)	May not have enough time for all contributors.	Allow trades to continue quietly at back of the room.
Freedom was the keynote, and no checking up on individuals was done until all had grown accustomed to this new procedure. After the procedure was firmly established and students felt secure in this "free reading," they were asked to read any descriptive, or exciting part to the class.	Some students, knowing that the teacher was not going to check on their work, may have a tendency to wander and disturb.	Check the students' work and reading progress unobtrusively and unthreateningly.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To provide more opportunity for "free reading".

To help the less able readers develop more interest in reading.

To increase the ability to summarize and speak before a group.

To provide the opportunity to share things with others.

To instill a like and desire for books for some; and reinforce it for others.

Observed Outcomes

Due to the tremendous variety and number of books which were obtained in this manner, it was possible to reach all levels of reading achievement. Everyone, from lowest to highest, became involved in this program and looked forward to it with great anticipation.

Eventually, even those with lower levels of reading ability were bringing books to share with the others and seemed to delight in telling the class about their books. These people, within the limits of their abilities, became quite avid readers, and as a result, their reading improved a great deal.

Oral expression and the ability to summarize a story also improved.

INDIVIDUALIZED READING

Daisy Reber
Virgin Valley Elementary

INDIVIDUALIZED READING

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I had been wanting to try the individualized reading program that had been advocated by so many educators. Our district still required us to complete the adopted basic texts. We also had to give the reading tests after we had finished each text. My problem was how I could do both.

I decided I would take the first period in the morning and let each child select his own reading book. Each child would read as long as he wanted to. Then he could go on to other tasks. While he is doing this I could help the small groups with their basic texts and workbooks.

The children liked this period so well that if they ever had to miss it for some special programs, they would ask to have it later. The amount of reading they did was tremendous. Many were reading on the third and fourth grade level. I felt that they did more reading this year than before. They also learned to love the books and stories they had read.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Talk about the library, how it functions, and the vast store of knowledge in it.	Children may not like to read.	Ready-many good stories and poems to children to arouse their interest.
Visit the library.	Children may be careless with books.	Put out the lower level books first.
Make some experience charts of our visit.	Will they read or just look at the pictures?	Begin a story and then let the children finish it.
Read the children some interesting poems and stories.		Teacher keeps a check list of each child's reading and the date he has read to him.
Talk about our room library and the care of it.		
Tell the children they can choose any book they want to read.	They may choose books too hard for them.	
Give each of the children a note-book to keep a list of the books they read.	They may develop poor reading habits, such as skipping lines, pointing with their fingers, and mis-pronouncing words.	For those children who are having difficulty with phonics, call them in small groups and give them extra help.
Instruct them that after they have finished a story they are to make a brief book report. They are to name the title, author, and tell something about the story.	The class might be so large it would be impossible to check each student very often.	
They are to illustrate the story they have read.	The student who needs the reading most might spend most of his time on other activities.	

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE:		
The child may chose the book he wants to read.		
Give ample time each morning for the child to read.	The child may never finish a book.	Have the child tell you or the children the story.
Let the children read together if they want to.	One child might do all the reading.	Instruct the children to "take turns."
Give each child a chance to read to the children.	The child may not get enough oral reading.	If the teacher can't hear those who are having trouble often enough, put them with a more mature child.
Let the children tell about their stories.		
Let each child progress at his own rate.	The children who fall behind might get discouraged.	
Give the child plenty of time to write about his story and illustrate it.		Because there is no division of children into groups, he is less apt to be aware that he is not progressing as fast as the others.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To develop a love for reading in all the students.

To increase the child's comprehension.

To increase the rate of reading and the amount of reading.

To develop reading skills.

To develop independence and assurance in each child.

To make the reading period an enjoyable and exciting time.

Observed Outcomes

The children loved to read.

Reading tests showed the class very high in reading skills.

The faster readers weren't held back for those who had more difficulty.

The slower readers made more progress.

CREATING A DESIRE TO WRITE

Doris M. Coon
Austin Elementary School

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

CREATING A DESIRE TO WRITE

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I wanted my first grade children to do some creative writing on the first day of school, so that they would have some good first impressions of writing and the satisfaction of knowing they could communicate in writing.

After reading the first story in our pre-primer, we talked about our own experiences. We decided to make a picture of one we enjoyed most and write one word to tell about it. We wanted to do this very well so we could take it home to show our parents.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
We read a story in our pre-primer and discussed it.		
Each child told about something interesting he had seen or done.	A child may say, "I didn't do anything."	The teacher may get a response by questions. The child may look around the room or in a magazine for one.
III. PRACTICE:		
We decided to draw a picture of the thing that interested us.	The child may say, "I can't draw."	The teacher may say, "Draw it, the way you think it looks." It doesn't have to look like any other picture.
After drawing the picture we thought of one word we would like to write under it.	The children didn't know how to write.	The teacher writes the desired word in very large letters on the blackboard or paper. The children copy.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To create a desire in the child to express his thoughts on paper.

To create some good first impressions of school.

To relate the basal reader, which we use, to the child's own experience.

Observed Outcomes

Most of the children were anxious to tell their experiences.

The experiences of Sally became more real.

The children were thrilled that they actually could show their experiences in pictures and writing.

Some of the children were wanting words to write under pictures next day.

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND PUPIL MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

CREATIVE WRITING

Thelma B. Olsen
Virgin Valley Elementary School

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

CREATIVE WRITING

WHY?

Perhaps the first question one would pose if she were to undertake a creative writing program in her class would be WHY?

Children all want to write. It is the responsibility of the teacher to develop every skill she possibly can to artfully guide a writing program which will glean the nutmeat from the labyrinths of each child's shell of experiences and potential words of creative written expression. As the teacher and the students put their toes into the oceans of creative writing experiences, they will move cautiously at first, but as they find the waters invigorating and learn to swim, they will want to swim into new depths, explore new shorelines and lagoons and even swim out into new distances beyond protective but restrictive harbors.

The teacher, as the lifeguard, will be on the alert to save the child who may seem to experience the cramps of inhibition, the bends of discouragement, or a drowning of failure.

As new horizons of awareness open up to the students through creative writing, they become more imaginative and sensitive to sensory stimuli (sights, sounds, smells, tastes and sensations of touch). They gain new appreciations and understandings of their environment. They are increasingly able to communicate their assimilations through the medium of writing.

As the children have experiences with creative writing, they naturally want to share some of their works with others. They want their work to be accepted. They want to gain new skills in communicating

effectively and correctly. Out of these wants, skills in writing will subtly, quietly and individually grow. A skillful and artful teacher will be alert to these sometimes fleeting recognitions of new skills as the need arises. She will know that oft times creative writing is an "out" for a feeling of frustration, discouragement or repression.

This leads us to the "Hows" of creative writing. The need for a rich environment is as much or more a part of a good creative writing program as it is any other aspect of curriculum. The child who has opportunities to see, to hear, to smell, to taste and to touch will consequently draw upon these experiences in his writing. The child who is secure in his classroom environment and feels a warm relationship with his teacher has had the door to creative writing opened for him.

The child whose teacher recognizes the difference between a creative approach and a practical approach to writing has an added boost to set him on his way to success.

Now that we have been exposed to some "why's" and "how's" of creative writing let's look again at one of the things of which we are already aware concerning the language growth of children.

They have many words in their speaking vocabulary which are not, as yet, a part of their spelling vocabulary. Consequently, they need help in bridging the gap. Two possible ways present themselves. One involves the writing of needed words on the blackboard by the teacher, and one finds the teacher at her desk with pre-cut pieces of scratch paper to jot down words, groups of words, sentences or even whole compositons as the students ask for them.

After a piece of work is written, what is to be done with it? Is it to be beheaded by the ax of preconceived standards held in the hands of the teacher executioner? Is it to be thrown out to the ravenous beasts of class criticism?

There are as many things to do with a piece of creative writing as there are needs and desires of the students. Some would include:

1. Voluntary oral reading on the part of the student.
2. Oral reading sanctioned by the student and accomplished by the teacher.
3. Displaying the work for a purpose after typing or rewriting. (Be careful of this one.)
4. Placing the work in an individual scrapbook.
5. Placing the work in a story box.
   a) A box of stories to be shared with the class.
   b) A personal box of stories to be written to the teacher only.
6. Discarding the work without any type of sharing.

Some suggestions for a developmental program:

1. Children love to express their feelings to their teacher, who, in turn, writes their thoughts for them and encourages imaginations through having them pretend.

   Pretend you are an animal.

   Pretend you are a clown.

   Pretend you_____*_____ in the story I read to you called___*___.
   (* Teacher can help by providing leads and giving the students an opportunity to fill in.)

   I am (a, an)_____. I came from_____. I am glad

   I am_____ to be here.
   not glad

Spontaneity and enthusiasm with small children would be lost by the child who has to copy word by word after the teacher. A later writing (or penmanship) lesson

could involve such copying, however. Some children will want to read their work to the class, perhaps, during the reading program.

2. A little older child can begin to grow through imagery and sensory apperception. Similes are enjoyed at this level:

As loud as_____.

As fluffy as_____.

As bright as_____.

These can be preceded by a teacher provided lead. Smells, tastes, feelings and sounds provide ideas for creative expression at this level. Fresh and spontaneous treasures may be recorded by the teacher.

3. Further growth could expand from some of the ideas and background earlier. Children can begin to perform and personificate more abstractly. Whole phrases may still have to be written on the blackboard, however, to continually insure enthusiasm and spontaneity.

4. The older students who have had the above background are ready for more advanced writing involving similes, animation, projection, personification, interesting sequences enlarging experimental background, etc. If a child is going to continue to write creatively in later years, much care will be taken to not stifle him through negativism and lack of enthusiasm and understanding on the part of the

teacher, etc. A stockpile of work of other students who are unknown to the class may be used for evaluation to help improve quality.

SOME DO'S AND DON'TS OF CREATIVE WRITING

DO - - encourage animation and personification to promote free release of feeling and thinking.
- - provide interesting and exciting stimuli (or use student's suggestions). Be careful not to over stimulate.
- - avoid any type of criticism that will thwart future attempts.
- - help the students over spelling obstacles.
- - use the completed work in an appropriate and desired manner.
- - base work in language skills on felt or realized needs and on an individual, group or class basis without pointing openly to creative writing as a source for such work. (Students may be blocked.)

DON'T - - constantly set up models or ideas to be consciously or unconsciously followed. (Recognize and encourage individual treasures of thought coming from the students.)
- - force continually anyone to write if he doesn't want to. Rarely will a child not want to participate, however, if teacher acceptance is apparent. Sometimes alternate and related assignments can be worked out if accepted.
- - try to pick a "best" piece of work or compare one student's work with another's negatively.
- - give grades for individual pieces of work. (Of course, progress in creative writing may find a place in evaluative systems, such as conferences, but not so that it reflects back and stymies interest.)
- - enforce penmanship standards during creative writing, (at least not on the original drafts.)
- - over stimulate. (But be receptive to student contributions and ideas.)

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR CREATIVE WRITING STIMULI

- - magazine covers (many Post covers are excellent).
- - pet fish in a bowl or an aquarium.
- - pieces of driftwood grotesquely or interestingly shaped.
- - clouds, snow, wind or other weather conditions (children seem always to feel emotional over extreme weather and sometimes may settle down after a good creative writing situation.
- - expressive music, which they enjoy.
- - imaginative poems or stories.
- - fascinating vehicles of transportation with their size, noise, and movement (trains, jet planes, road graders, etc.).
- - ink blot designs made with poster paint.
- - bouquet of autumn leaves (how did they get their many colors?)
- - sound records (trains, jet planes, etc.)
- - many types of sensory experiences.

SOME "FIRST LINE" SUGGESTIONS

- - leaves turn to many colors in the fall because_____.
- - if I were a real witch on Halloween I would_____.
- - if I were one of the Pilgrim children on the Mayflower, I would_____.
- - if I discovered the Seven Cities of Gold that Coronado was looking for I would_____.
- - I get "blue" whenever I think of_____.
- - I would like to be a mountain top and look down on many interesting things. I would see_____.
- - if I found the Fountain of Youth that Ponce de Leon looked for I would_____.
- - if I were Jim Hawkins sacking that treasure I would_____.
- - when I hear a train whistle, I think of_____.
- - (after eating a marshmallo) Marshmallows taste like_____. The taste of a marshmallo reminds me of_____.
- - the smell of sagebrush reminds me of_____.

A BEGINNING UNIT ON CREATIVE WRITING IN THE SIXTH GRADE

Marian Hepworth
Wells Elementary School

A BEGINNING UNIT ON CREATIVE WRITING IN THE SIXTH GRADE

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The sixth grade class of next fall will be losing one of its members, Beth Harper, as the family is moving to Rangely, Colorado. From the experience I had with the past two sixth grade classes writing to students in Australia through Mr. Harper's acquaintance with the principal there, I am sure that Mr. Harper will create interest with his Rangely, Colorado sixth grade to write to us. I have spoken to him about this project and he said he would do what he could to carry it through. Beth's friends in Wells will enjoy hearing from her and her new friends in Rangely.

I would hope that through this experience and other creative writing during the year that the students would develop a good style in writing, as well as firmly understanding the form of the friendly letter. The students' vocabulary should increase, and in cases where there is a need for better spelling, I would hope that this writing would help strengthen any weakness. The students would be required to correct their mistakes so this should strengthen their grammar. It would also be a good experience in reading, as the letters received from the Rangely students would be read in class. Each letter would need to be read clearly and not too fast so good oral reading would be encouraged.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Review form of friendly letter, content, and paragraphing.	Poor beginning sentence. Asking too many questions. Trying to include too much in their first letter.	Class discussion over what should not be in the letters, how much to tell.
Purchase a large manila envelope to enclose all the first letters.		
III. PRACTICE:		
Class discussion of form and content of the friendly letter.	Don't drag this out but keep the discussion moving along so interest will not be killed.	Try a student led discussion of background information.
Students write first draft of their letter.	Teacher makes necessary corrections and keep a record of each students' errors for drill where there are weaknesses.	Ask them to proofread letters before handing them in to eliminate careless mistakes. Encourage use of the dictionary.
Students copy letters in ink, correcting all their mistakes. Encourage neatness.		
Teacher works with small groups who have similar weaknesses in grammar and spelling.		

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To help each student develop an original style of expression in letter writing.

To help each student increase his vocabulary.

To help strengthen spelling weaknesses.

To help improve each student's grammar and punctuation.

To have each student develop the habit of proofreading his material.

To develop better oral expression.

Unexpected Results or Pitfalls

Some of the students in Wells may be disappointed as all the letters may not be answered. Some of the students may have to seek elsewhere for a pen pal and this would take longer to receive and answer and could kill their enthusiasm for the project. The first packet of letters could become lost, heaven forbid!

IMPROVING CREATIVE WRITING ON A JUNIOR HIGH LEVEL

L. Dean Lee
Virgin Valley High School

IMPROVING CREATIVE WRITING ON A JUNIOR HIGH LEVEL

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Young teenagers, as do adults, store stimuli. One effective method of creating motivation is to create effective communication of stored stimuli through the use of creative writing. I am interested in demonstrating that each junior high school student has an individual talent for creative writing; and that through creative writing in the classroom atmosphere the student can achieve substantial parts of the four basic human wishes (W. I. Thomas) of (1) security, (2) recognition, (3) response, and (4) new experiences. Learning how to learn is much more important than learning what to learn.

In order to improve creative writing on a junior high level incorporating ideas gained at the W.S.S.S.P. Workshop, this project will involve:

A. Frequent exposure to creative writing.

B. Use of prompting techniques to stimulate creativeness.

C. Inclusive use of classroom atmosphere as the "state" for creative writing experiences.

D. No homework assignments.

E. "Soft pedal critique" technique.

F. Group response to individual creative writing efforts.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. **PREPARATION:**		
During a day in each week when students can be scheduled for the longest period, arrange this time for the creative writing period. In the flexibility of a modular schedule, a period of $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 hours could be arranged each week and could conceivably include the entire junior high school on a large group instruction basis.	Principal unable to allow time of this nature.	As an alternate use of time, use some of the English time each week. As a secondary goal, creative writing will teach spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure.
Explain to the students that they will have an opportunity to express themselves through the adventure of creative writing.		

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE:		
Set no limitations on subject matter, form of creative writing, or length. No texts. No work-books. No required writing standards. Students must feel free and at ease in their thinking.	Student may be unable to independently think of anything to write.	Prepare a "prompt sheet" for the student which will contain the beginning sentences of several unfinished themes.
Stress the undertaking and completing of creative writing projects in the classroom - - not at home.	Student claims to be able to study more effectively at home.	Explain that parental or other help will defeat the basic goal of creative writing - - that of expressing one's own self.
Offer constructive criticism as much as possible, but be sure not to destroy inner creativeness by too much negative criticism which is of a purely pedagogical nature.	Student may get a false feeling of security from doing inferior work.	Again, the primary goal of creative writing is to bring out into written form one's inner self. If an honest effort is made to do this, a teacher will do well to ask little more of a student.
Honor apt examples of creative writing which have enamated from the group. Use may be made of such teaching devices as reading aloud, displaying on the board, or displaying on screen with overhead projector. These last two devices carry the subtle effect of inspiring students to write their best style.	Student may not care to have his work displayed or read to the group.	Conduct the sampling and honoring of examples without reference to individual names.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

A. It is expected that students of the junior high school level will learn to appreciate their individuality and unique characteristics through creative writing experiences.

B. Not only will an inner self be rediscovered, but also in the process it is expected that the mechanics of written communication will be significantly improved.

C. Academic aims: Use of acceptable rules and regulations of grammar. Organization and written transfer of thought. Orientation in the world of written, emotional communication.

Undesirable Results

A. Failure of a student to rely on his own thoughts for a composition.

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND PUPIL MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

IMPROVING EXPRESSION IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Marie York
Mina Elementary School

IMPROVING EXPRESSION IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

For ten years I had thrilled over the wonderful stories my first and second grade children had been able to create and when I looked at the compositions written by the fifth and sixth grade children the experience was always disappointing. As a teacher it was embarrasing to gather the wonderful thoughts and be witness to the poor mechanics, the abominable spelling, and the general mess of the papers.

So, I asked my superintendent if I could teach the fifth and sixth grade to see if I could improve their written composition. He said, "Yes!"

Two years have passed and the children are writing beautiful compositions!

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. **PREPARATION:**		
WSSSP SUMMER WORKSHOP Loose leaf notebook was labeled, "Student Service." Students names were listed alphabetically, one name to the page.	Lack of Skills.	Confidence in the children! Lead them to self-committment. Slow or fast take each child from where he is, one step at a time, through speaking and into writing. Use of "student service" for diagnostic record of each child's needs in order to accomplish the goal in mind.
Planning with students. They were told that their time was not be be wasted from now on; they were only going to learn things that they didn't know.	How will I get these kids to do what I want them to do? They must learn how to learn.	Periodic assessment of each child's record with checklists of a number of skill areas marked for group or individual instruction.
Students visited Hawthorne library and selected 100 books.	Will they accept critical evaluation and proceed positively? Will they work hard?	Group and individual conferences (seminars) were held and children were encouraged to practice in their area of need during all free time.
Back in their own classroom they chose books they liked and read freely for a week or so.	How can I make them want to write well?	Encouraged self-direction.
Tape recorder and head phones made ready.		Accepted what each child did without personal corrections on paper. Used the positive approach and reinforced good efforts by praising and suggestions. Some mention of the growth in composition was always noted.
Elicited the economy of sharing.		Related skills were planned and taught.
Students taped what was interesting to them in the book they read.		
After each tape was heard, the procedure was to place the class on a critiquing basis while I wrote this down in the notebook. (Book became known as the "Bug Book" as it contained a list of what "bugged" each child.)		

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
		Children were encouraged to try each time to speak and write more naturally, realistically and creatively.
	Students many times reverted to old mistakes.	Teacher must keep making new lists and reteaching specific skills needed at the moment.
III. PRACTICE:		
Tape recordings played back give confidence and children find that they can write anything that they can say.		
Children were responsible for one written composition each week. They could choose their own topic.	What if they cannot think of anything to write?	Children themselves suggested many, many interesting areas. These were listed and sometimes "story starters" were written on the blackboard or put on the tape recorder.
		Any fairy tale could be used by taking the original story part way and then having the children give a modern version as they finished the story. Transfer value from any of their text books; i.e., "My trip to Florida."
		Give many interesting and some comical dictations.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To have children express their feelings in writing and to enjoy doing so.

To have children accept positive criticism from their teachers and their peers.

To gain the understanding that when something is done about the criticism there is a gain in the growth.

To provide opportunity to have each child bear witness to his own growth in expressing ideas in visual or written form.

Observed Outcomes

Problems were worked out consensus-wise which strengthened general concern for one another. Students are able to write quickly and well. They are proud of this ability. Individual instruction, evaluation, diagnostic procedures paved the way to creative writing.

Unexpected Results

EVERY CHILD IN THE ROOM COULD WRITE WELL BY THE END OF THE YEAR! THE WHOLE AREA OF LANGUAGE ARTS WAS INVOLVED. IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND ANY "DYED IN THE WOOL" SEQUENCE OF SKILLS. EVERYTHING WAS RELATIVE.

V. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:

A. Use of tape recorder and head phones. Keeping of individual tapes for comparison.

B. Library books, pictures, maps, color, music, etc., and a great variety of ordinary materials.

C. Notebook for record keeping (dated).

D. Folder for each child.

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND PUPIL MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

IMPROVING SELF EXPRESSION

Robert H. Beatty
Panaca Elementary School

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

IMPROVING SELF EXPRESSION

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I am interested in helping my children take more responsibility for their own learning; to provide more opportunities for independent study and at the same time let the children express themselves by experimenting and working with varied art media.

I want to set up two different centers for this development. One will be an Art Center and the other a Science Center.

I hope to have the children be able to use, and if need be to schedule a time to use, the media which will be on hand for their use.

This has been used by Mrs. McCall and I am desirous to see how it will help my children.

This should be an added incentive for the youngsters to express themselves, and an ideal way for them to release energy and emotions.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
I will prepare an art center with varied media for the children to use.	Some students have a tendency to be rather sloppy. The art center could become messy.	The teacher will have to admonish the children to keep clean where they work, but still allow them to get right into the work.
The students will know that the center is a place they can use any time they have time to spend.	Some students may need to be reminded to clean up and wear protective clothing.	They will have to be reminded that a house of order is necessary for good learning.
I will have them bring an old shirt to cover their good clothes.	Fear of getting paint on themselves.	Let them know it is legal to get their arms in the water colors or finger paints.
In the Science center I will have different things for them to use in experiments of their own.		
III. PRACTICE:		
In the science center I would like to have them learn to investigate things around them such as: a fish's scales, a butterfly's wing, a flower's parts.	The fear of breaking the equipment, or of possible peer pressure.	Teach them to use the equipment correctly, and make them aware that we are all different and therefore do things differently.
I think they will do this if the proper atmosphere is set up for it, and the proper materials are provided.		

IV. EVALUATION:

DESIRED OUTCOMES

To give the students an opportunity to release frustrations and emotions.

To allow suggestions to come from student's peers.

To provide opportunities to come to school to solve their own problems.

To provide opportunities for solving curiosities about the world around them.

To provide a sense of desire to be on time to school.

UNEXPECTED RESULTS OR PITFALLS

The teacher could become too involved in this and take the individuality out of the project. He should serve only as a resource person.

V. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

A. Art Center

1. looms and yarn
2. easel and paints
3. finger paints
4. mosaics
5. clay
6. soap for carving

B. Science Center

1. microscope
2. magnifying glasses
3. magnets
4. batteries
5. science resource books

READ FOR FUN TO IMPROVE ORAL EXPRESSION

Esther H. Underkofler
Wells Elementary School

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

READ FOR FUN TO IMPROVE ORAL EXPRESSION

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

We decided to do some fun reading the last year after we had finished three basal texts, I wanted the children to read the way one talks. I also hoped to increase an interest in reading and to teach the use of question marks.

Each child took a book from the reading table and selected his own story. He read the story and decided whether it was a good story to read in parts. He then selected the people who were to participate in the story. First he chose a narrator, and then chose the students who were to represent the different characters of the story. Each child read only what the person or animal said (within the quotation marks). Some of the children preferred to sit in their seats and some groups wanted to stand before the class, but it was still oral reading as there was no memorization of lines. Almost every time it was done most effectively.

The child would make a few criticisms as well as praise the pupil who had read exceptionally well. It was a wonderful experience in learning to read as you talk.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Books were placed on the reading table.	Selecting a book too difficult.	Teachers can act as resource person to help in selection.
The child took his book to his seat and went through the Table of Contents until he found a story he would like to read.	Selecting stories with too few characters - only a few participating.	More fun when a greater number of people are participating.
He might read several stories before he found one he could use for this particular type of reading.		
III. PRACTICE:		
He chose a narrator and the characters for the story.		
After silent reading they were ready to read to the class.		

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To give enjoyment to reading.

To allow the children to critize or praise the participant.

To learn the use of quotation marks.

To read the way we talk.

To want to read more books.

Observed Outcomes

Students were high in their praise of this kind of reading.

We wish we could do a lot more reading of this kind.

The desire to help other children with words.

The desire to read more books.

IMPROVING ORAL EXPRESSION

Helen S. Black
Wells Grammar School

IMPROVING ORAL EXPRESSION

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I wished to help my youngsters to be able to speak better and more easily.

Each day I had oral English. The youngsters told about something which they had done or had planned to do. After each spoke the class discussed the way the child spoke with regard to:

Tone of voice

Expression

Correct English

I felt this was time well used, because the children learned from hearing others speak. It helped those who found it difficult to express themselves in words.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
A list of words most often used.	Child unable to speak before a group.	Teacher must encourage some children by allowing them to speak from their seats.
Dictionaries were used to find meanings and pronunciations of words not known.	Use words beyond their comprehension.	Help children to choose words mostly used at their own level.
Stories were read to help to know how to use words in content.		
III. PRACTICE:		
Children know they are to be ready each day.	Child not prepared.	Try to have children understand it is their responsibility to have lesson prepared and ready to be given.
Children make comments on how each has spoken.	Children sometimes severe.	Help children to be kinder in their comments.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To give children experience in speaking before an audience.

To give children a way for using good English.

To help children to have a better understanding of each other.

Observed Outcomes

Children were abie to speak more easily before an audience.

Children learned to use correct English.

Children learned from each other's mistakes.

Children learned to have more tolerance toward each other.

Unexpected Results or Pitfalls

Children's criticism too severe.

V. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:

1. Use of library
2. Word lists
3. Dictionaries

IMPROVING ORAL EXPRESSION

Amy D. Mathews
Panaca Elementary School

Improving Oral Expression

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I was interested in helping my eighth grade English class improve oral reading and oral presentations through developing skills in enunciation, pronunciation, grammatical usage, voice control, and adaptation of delivery to the purpose of the presentation. I hoped to increase interest in the subject matter field, to encourage democratic procedure, teach how to conduct a business meeting and participate in the monthly election of officers for a speech club organized in our English class.

Each student held an office in the club at least once during the year. Club officers were elected once each month. The class president assigned two or more people to prepare an oral presentation for the next meeting which was always held each Wednesday during the English class period.

On the basis of student opinion the club operated quite successfully. Students learned from each other and from various texts how best to conduct their meetings and how to get fellow classmen to prepare some type of oral presentation for the next meeting.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
A suggested list of program material was gathered by the students and teacher was put on a shelf. Suggested rules of order were studied and practiced by the class. A sample organization meeting and review of the guides for taking part in discussions got the class off to a good start. A committee was appointed to write bylaws as suggested by a sample bylaws. "Clubs are Fun" by Letton & Ries, Pub. by S.R.A. provided much help.	Some students failed to select suitable materials for oral presentation.	Teacher to assist students in selecting materials, if necessary.
Students visited the library to select poems and stories.		
One book report was required to be given orally. The student must give his evaluation of the book.		
Tape recorder was used to help student improve oral expression.		
Students did creative writing of stories and poems. Some were excellent and the presentation was best when student had done his own writing.		

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE:		
Students receiving assignments from the class president had one week in which to prepare a reading, memorize a poem, do his own bit of creative writing, or to dramatize a short play written by the class.	Afraid of criticism from peers. Fear of own voice on mike.	Practice in front of class and repeated play back of voice is best way to overcome this fear.
As the year advanced each student presented a book report and evaluated it. The tape recording of this was played back for class evaluation.		
Constructive criticism was always in order and proved helpful to the class. Improvements such as enunciation, pronunciation, grammar, voice, gestures, standing posture, looking out at the audience, and ease of manner were encouraged.		

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To give students experience in conducting meetings.

To give students a chance to prepare and present their own selected material.

To provide an opportunity for the overall improvement of oral presentations.

To help students improve the quality of oral expression.

Observed Outcomes

Students enjoyed conducting their own meetings and listening to the prepared programs.

At graduation time this class did a much better presentation of their program than last year's class that did not organize a speech club. Much improvement was noted in:

a. Enunciation
b. Pronunciation
c. Ease of manner
d. Posture
e. General delivery

In short, the Speech Class Activities were quite popular and helped the student with self improvement.

The students did accept responsibility for their own learning which helped them to become more independent and better satisfied with the outcome of their work.

IMPROVING ABILITY IN ORAL REPORTS

Odetta McGargill
Carlin Elementary School

IMPROVING ABILITY IN ORAL REPORTS

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I was interested in having my students find resource material for an oral report. I further hoped to increase their ability and responsibility for giving an interesting and entertaining oral report. This practice was done as a culminating project after a year's study of United States History.

Students learned from each other both in content area and in skills in giving oral reports.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION: A list of books in the subject area from our school library was secured on the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade levels. The students chose one or more books. Some used encyclopedias as well. The teacher kept a list of each subject chosen by a student so that there would be no duplicate reports.	Some students selected material beyond their ability. Some students, needed help in selecting and condensing material.	Teacher conferences helped student with reading and selecting material.
III. PRACTICE: Oral reports were given by the students on some event or about an important or famous person in our history. A panel of four students was chosen to act as a "What's My Line" panel. This panel was replaced three different times, so that each student might have a chance to stump the panel. The reports tested the research done by the student, his knowledge of the subject, and his ingenuity in making his report as interesting as possible and yet trying to keep the panel from guessing his subject.		

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS

III. PRACTICE: - Continued

The students were enthusiastic. They strove to improve their reports to secure class approval and recognition

IV: EVALUATION:

Desired Outcome

To give students experience in choosing a subject, in gathering materials, and in presenting this material in an interesting way.

Observed Outcome

The students showed ability to choose appropriate and interesting material.

They showed ability to work independently.

They showed ability to reproduce the material with imagination.

They showed sufficient interest and enthusiasm to make the practice seem worthwhile.

TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH CREATIVE WRITING AND ORAL EXPRESSION IN GRADES VII AND VIII

Albion Ogee
Goodsprings, Nevada

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH
CREATIVE WRITING AND ORAL EXPRESSION IN
GRADES VII AND VIII

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The two grades I teach contain pupils who are low in vocabulary according to the C. A. T. Testing Program; therefore, it is my hope to help children improve their vocabulary through creative writing and oral expression.

Pupils will select favorite books from the library, study general format of the books, style of literary patterns, and make lists of criticisms thay may have of the books.

Children will be asked to write a short character description on each book and have it ready to be taped on recorder. As we proceed through the year, these recordings are to be saved so that we may evaluate our own work at the end of the year.

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PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Teach children how to use card catalog.		
Students discuss books they have read with some of their favorite characters.	Some students shy. Will not contribute to class discussion.	
Emphasize that student's evaluation of the character description is an important factor.		
Have tapes and recorder ready for operation.		
III. PRACTICE:		
Have children tell why they like or dislike any of the characters.	Some may not be able to express themselves.	Ask questions that will help children evaluate characters.
If students were assuming the role of the character, would they have reacted in the same way?		

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

1. To give students experience in dramatic play
2. To give students a degree of sophistication about people
3. To provide an opportunity for oral expression
4. Children will be able to use card catalog

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND PUPIL MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

IMPROVING TEACHING VOCABULARY BUILDING

ED 104 103

Mary Ann Miller
Smith Valley High School

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

IMPROVING TEACHING VOCABULARY BUILDING

1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I was interested in breaking from the traditional "Let's-have-vocabulary-on-Wednesday, bring your-book" technique. I wanted to try three different approaches to building vocabulary in grades 9 - 12 last term. These three approaches:

1. A study of the history of our tongue and of individual words.
2. A study of "applied semantics."
3. A survey, with remedial work, of the pupil's knowledge and use of knowledge.

No other subject (vocabulary) in high school, not even spelling, is so entirely dependent upon the common sense, interest, and intelligence of the teacher. The students were to learn that usage demands a comprehension of shades of implications more difficult by far than the mere arrangement of letters in a word. But the very fact that it is difficult and must of necessity grow with the growth of ideas, make it essential that vocabulary work should permeate every discussion, every piece of literature read, every composition assignment planned with the class, every talk by the teacher, every spelling lesson, every oral report.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Capture interest through group work --discussion, wonder, a volunteered investigation, much give-and-take talk lays the incentive.	Shortage of reference materials in our limited library.	Arrange with the Bookmobile and Lyon County for resource books.
Use two standards for the levels of speech. ("Good" English is appropriate English.) Misused "shall" and "will" are not in the same class with "ain't got no."		
It is only <u>after</u> pupils are sensitive to levels of speech, and alive to the intrinsic interest in words, that the dictionary becomes important to them.	The student will not understand all the information, signs, and abbreviations for a given word.	Explain these dictionary aids: Alphabetical arrangement of words, Intelligent use of guide words, Intelligent use of key words at the bottom of the page, The breve and micron, The way the accent is marked for both primary and secondary, The way syllables are divided in contrast to the way compound words are joined.
Talk of word histories.	Although reputable dictionaries may be trusted as to ancient word histories and meanings, with contemporary meanings or pronunciations, they lag from five to fifteen years behind accepted usage.	Show that language is an alive, growi changing entity; that a dictionary merely records what at various times educated people have made correct by their usage.
The preceding work lays a foundation for "applied semantics -- " the study of words not as solitary entities, not as subjects for phonetics and semantics, but as factors in meaning. Consider taboo words, beginning perhaps with some of the customs of primitive people. This area widens euphemisms.	Notice that present-day speech and newspapers, more moral delinquency, avoid specifics by using "in trouble," "a misdemeanor," "misconduct".	Use Sir James George Frazer's <u>Golden Bough</u>, a concise one-volume edition to illustrate taboo words from primitive to present culture.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION - Continued		
Teach students to discover the muddled thinking, the confusions, and the emotional reactions in thought about them, and in their own thinking.	Discovery of the unsuspected affectation, prejudice, snobbishness, unfair dealing, or actual deceit in the words of their elders is heady wine for secondary students.	Encourage that the students keep a sane outlook on life.
Controversy -- an honest differing of minds, not of emotions -- is a necessary adjunct to intellectual growth.	To keep to a rational, not an emotional, discussion, for the very purpose of this work is to lay bare the unfortunate effect upon thinking and emotion and prejudice. The teacher's purpose is also to lay bare the unsuspected power of the word over human thought.	Reinforce the phrase "a person who can discuss without arguing."
Surveying the pupil's knowledge and use of language includes:	Homonyms are confusing.	First consider (and last use correctly) such common words, confused primarily as to spelling, not meaning.
Disentangling like forms that have become more or less jumbled.		
Sharpening and defining the uses and meanings of words already known. Work on synonyms not only fixes the meaning, but is an excellent device for increasing a pupil's usable vocabulary.		
Growing accustomed to the usual idiomatic combinations of certain words.	Prepositions cause much trouble. Usage, not reason, has determined what is correct speech.	Consult Fowler's Modern English Usage for the correct preposition verbal idiom.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION - Continued		
Gaining power from a knowledge of prefixes, roots, and suffixes so that the meaning of new words may be inferred. The dissection of words so that their parts may be clearly recognized should take an important place, five minutes one day, two another, three a third, all in classwork. On the board would appear "mono," "bi," "di," "tri," with the ever growing list of monologue, monotone, bipend, bicycle, etc.		
Learning new words which will be of actual use to pupils in talking, writing, and reading.	The pupils' interest in new words rests in part upon the type of test the teacher gives.	Class-made tests teach more than a standardized test.
III. PRACTICE:		
Give an introductory three minute talk on the resources of the dictionary. (Arouse interest rather than give information.)		
Select three words that have histories of interest to high school pupils. (You awaken interest in words.)		
Select such a word as "hand" or "eye". Show how it has broadened in meaning.	Lack of resource materials	Have copies purchased of Logan Pearsall Smith's Words and Idioms, Houghton Mifflin, 1935.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE - Continued		
Select three words similar to "liquor" or "ghost." Indicate how their meaning has narrowed.		
Select three words that have degenerated in meaning. Trace their history. ("Victuals" is an example.)		
Explain clearly and interestingly the terms of "root," "stem," "prefix," "suffix," illustrating the statements with twenty familiar words.	Lack of references.	Use a copy of Greenbough and Kittredge's Words and Their Ways, Chapter 13.
Find interesting origins for words. Collect examples for future use: dunce, jitney, cowcatcher, touchy.		
Explain the term "fossil" when applied to words.		
Make clear-cut, interesting, memorable explanations as to the difference in the use of: affect-effect, accept-except, already-all ready, beside-besides, due to-owing to, like-as (of, as, if), most-almost, liable-likely, healthy-healthful, associates-companions.		
Prepare a class assignment in which you introduce and assign words		

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
III. PRACTICE - Continued		
borrowed from several foreign sources. Point out that often certain types of words are borrowed from particular nations. For example, from the Dutch we have many sea terms.		
Give Lucy H. Chapman's method of coping with spelling demons. This is in Part V of Book IV of *Growth in Using English*.		
Define propaganda. Produce for a three-minute class talk three or four of the seven ways of influencing public opinion as illustrated in newspapers or magazines.		
In three chapters -- "Names Practical and Poetic," "The Technique of Names," "The Technique of Poetic Names" -- you will find a fresh imaginative outlook on words. Review for the class briefly.		
The class can study Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's chapter "On Jargon", of *On the Art of Writing*, 1916. It provides ways to discourage round-about expressions and trite phrases.		
Frame five problems for discussion that are capable of three or more possible solutions. Present to the class.		
Correctly spoken English is to be read and taped. Then it is to be replayed often that correct grammar can be learned by audio.	"Mike fright."	Practices and familiarity with a tape recorder are really the only ways to get over the fear of the microphone.

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To erase the old belief that vocabulary -- for best results -- can be taught one hour weekly.

To make dictionary work a pleasure, and not a punishment.

To show that vocabulary is integrated into the language arts plan.

To teach the meaning of symbols and abbreviations used in dictionaries.

To make vocabulary building interesting and easy.

To provide opportunity for improvement of English usage.

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Observed Outcomes

Students preferred the integrated vocabulary plan to the one hour per week plan. More progress was made in vocabulary building in the integrated plan as compared to the one hour per week plan.

Students learned from other students:

> words and origins; correction in English usage; developed an awareness that time and social forces influence meanings and usage; acquired a knowledge not only to protect themselves from simple misunderstanding, but also to give them an insight into language, a "feel" for it that will enable them to read with full understanding. Discussion of the words among students was obvious that they were studying words.

USING WRITING ASSIGNMENT SHEETS THAT PROVIDE CHOICES IN INDIVIDUALIZED ENGLISH LITERATURE

ED 212 114

Edward L. Hansen
Pahranagat Valley High School

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

USING WRITING ASSIGNMENT SHEETS THAT PROVIDE CHOICES IN INDIVIDUALIZED ENGLISH LITERATURE

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

I was interested in making assingments in English Literature in which the student was given a choice as to exactly what he would write upon a particular unit. This would allow the student to pick out those items that he felt were most important; to explore those areas that appealed to him. However, he would still be tied to the subject area.

I further hoped to stimulate interest, to promote creativity, to induce critical thinking, and to make the student sensitive to the world around him.

Each student, as he completes a unit in literature picks up a writing assignment sheet. The assignment sheet will have up to 25 choices or items for written activities. Normally I ask the student to pick at least five items from the 25 to write upon, and a definite number of written pages.

For example, I expect from senior students six pages of written work in ink, single spaced, with normal margins about Hamlet. A four-line poem will equal $\frac{1}{2}$ page of text, and an eight-line poem will equal one page of text. At least three pages of text other than poems are required.

PROCEDURE	ANTICIPATING POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Student picks up writing assignment sheet.		Individual help from teachers- mostly motivational.
Student picks at least 5 written activities.	Students can't get started.	
III. PRACTICE:		
Student writes an assigned number of pages.		
Edits and hands in for evaluation.		
Student reads selected parts in small groups.		
Group discussions on content.		

IV. EVALUATION:

Desired Outcomes

To permit a choice in writing assignments in English Literature.

To provide for individual differences and tastes.

Observed Outcomes

Student reaction is favorable.

Interest increases because every student is not required to do the same thing.

Student work tends to be evaluated against his ability, rather than be compared with his peers.

Greater understanding of the areas they do understand and enjoy.

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Written assignment sheet on Hamlet attached.

HAMLET

Assignment: Pick at least five of the following written activities and write enough to make a total of six pages of written work in ink, single spaced, normal margins. A four-line poem will equal $\frac{1}{2}$ page of text; an eight-line poem will equal one page of text and so on. At least 3 pages of text other than poems are required.

1. Write a poem about one of the characters.
2. Write a poem about one of the places or scenes.
3. Write a poem about one of the events.
4. Write a poem about one of the themes - - death, revenge, love, courage, integrity, fear, etc.
5. Choose one theme as the main one and defend your choice.
6. Write a letter young Fortinbras might have written to his uncle in Norway describing the events he came upon in Act V, Scene II.
7. Write Horatio's report to Fortinbras and the world that Hamlet requested he make.
8. How does this play relate to us today?
9. Could the slaughter in Hamlet have been prevented? Describe how.
10. Write a physical description of Hamlet, the Prince, or another character.
11. Characterize Hamlet, the Prince.
12. Characterize Claudius.
13. Characterize Gertrude.
14. Characterize Polonius.
15. Characterize Laertes.

16. Characterize Ophelia.

17. Characterize Horatio.

18. Write a review of Hamlet as a literary work.

19. Write a letter to your mother about your understanding and appreciation of Hamlet.

20. Write a theme: Hamlet (is-is not) a proper learning experience for an advanced English Class.

21. Compare Hamlet's and Laerte's reactions to the same situation - - the death of their fathers.

22. Discuss the importance of background sound.

23. Select one of the following pairs of characters: Horatio-Fortinbras; Gertrude-Ophelia; Laertes-Polonius; Laertes-Ophelia. Compare and contrast the two characters, and show how differences and similarities between them contribute to the effect of the play as a whole.

24. The very idea of language itself seems to color the world of Hamlet. Why do you think language is important to so many of the characters in Hamlet?

    Cite examples of the importance of language throughout the play.

HELPING SLOW READERS

James W. Kellison

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

HELPING SLOW READERS

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

In my introduction to an economics course, there were several students who were slow readers. The course required several books to be read which contained unfamiliar words and complicated graphs for detailed explanation of the materials.

I hoped to improve the general understanding of economics of the students along with increasing their reading pace and quality. Along with these two major goals in mind, I hoped to stimulate their interest in economics and reading in general.

In order to measure progress, I decided to use the "before-after" technique. This required a test of how fast they could read and the general understanding of the material. During the course, and at the end of the course, the test was to be repeated at regular intervals.

After each test I would explain the theories of speed reading to the individuals and point out specific problems of the individuals after quizzing them to find out where their problems were.

The problem students would be given exercises and ample opportunity to talk with each other.

The reaction of the students was good. Their interest rose, and their reading ability improved.

PROCEDURE	POSSIBLE BARRIERS	SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS
II. PREPARATION:		
Extension of office hours for testing and instruction.	Unwillingness on the part of the students and parents to give up the time.	Talking to parents and explaining purpose of the subject.
Devising tests to measure the present ability.	The present tests devised are not applicable to the present students.	Gaining suggestions from secondary material and rephrasing the material to fit the situation.
Selecting the exercises from the books and having the students practice them.	Unwillingness of the students to give up their time.	Base the program on a reward basis for participation.
After each test give individual instruction.		
III. PRACTICE:		
Individual talks to the student explaining why he should do the tests and exercises.	What if the students refuse to participate.	Do not give the extra praise to the students that the participants get.
Assign hours to each "problem" for testing and assignment of exercises.	Students fail to show up.	Talk to students and find out why they didn't show, and correct the situation.
Measure the reading ability of the students.		
Offer suggestions for improvement and assign further arrangements.		

IV. EVALUATION

DESIRED OUTCOMES

To improve the reading ability of the students.
To stimulate the students' interest in reading.
To create an understanding of basic economic principles.

OBSERVED OUTCOMES

The reading ability of the students increased with a stimulation of interest in reading economics.

The students were able to keep up with other students in the class.

The students participated in a class and gained confidence in their ability.

The students talked about the course among themselves, presenting to the group problems of understanding sections of the material.

The students became good listeners during lectures.

The students began to read outside material based on economics.

UNEXPECTED PITFALLS

One of the students proved not to have the ability - - his deficiency was in more areas than reading alone.

V. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:

A. Tests that were revised to fit the particular situation.

B. Exercises in economics that contained economic terms and graphs.

C. Motion pictures that explained the art of "speed reading."

D. A suggested reading list of books in economics.

VI. MODIFICATIONS:

The assignment hours will be given to the "problem" students on the basis of one hour per week. This hour would be used for individual instruction and evaluation also. The hour would be assigned as to when the student wanted it, as long as it fitted into my schedule.

The reading list of the students would be the same for all. This would enable me to get an idea of the interest of the students. The measurement of the tests would be based on the number of words per minute read, along with understanding of the material. The readership of the material will be based on the 10th grade level.

The students were evaluated by their advancement of reading ability. When they reached the general ability of 9th grade, they were dropped from the program. This gave me time to concentrate my efforts on other students.